

12 Dissertation Summary

Dissertation title: Democracy in the Lack of Interest: the Effects of Remote Internet Voting Implementation in the Electoral Process of Selected Countries

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Abstract: The dissertation thesis named *Democracy in the Lack of Interest: the Effects of Remote Internet Voting Implementation in the Electoral Process of Selected States* reflects the phenomenon of the last decade - incorporation of new media into the political process. Internet voting is one of the discussed and suggested solutions of the so-called crisis of democracy, which could possibly stop the negative trend of diminishing voter turnout in advanced western democracies. The entire academic debate can be summarized into one question: It is possible, that the way of ballot casting can affect the voter turnout in that scale, that we can recognize a significant-positive switch in the longtime turnout progression in the states and areas, where is possible to use internet voting for ballot casting?

In the begging we discussed the theory of voter turnout and the theory of voter participation from the scope of the crisis of democracy phenomenon, which is demonstrated on the already made synchronous-diachronic studies and an our own analysis of the European elections in years 1997-2014. On the basis of the debate concerning the gradation of the number of absenting voters we discuss the proper theoretical-methodological scope for researching the effects of remote internet voting implementation into the electoral process of selected states. For the identification of the possible benefits, we employed the rational choice theory with emphasis on the identification of physical and institutional barriers in the electoral process. In the historical-analytical part we deal with the origin and usage of the different ballot casting methods and its similarities with internet voting. This chapter gives the reader a historical overview of the development of various voting methods from ancient Greece to the present day, while also analyzing the success of progressive ballot casting methods. The third, empirically-analytical part deals with internet voting implementation in five European counties (Estonia, Switzerland, France, Norway and Spain). The separate case studies analyze in detail the reasons of RIV implementation, the scale of included electorate, the technical solution for internet voting, the results of pilot testing and the effect that RIV implementation had on voter turnout in the youngest segment of voters under 26 years. The analysis discovered, that in most cases it is not possible to conclusively demonstrate the positive and significant effects on the overall voter turnout after RIV implementation, or a clearly positive mobilization potential among the youngest group of voters.